

Amendments to the Claims

Please make the following amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for managing incremental storage, the apparatus comprising:

a policy management module configured to set a storage management policy for storage capacity of an incremental backup virtual volume, wherein the incremental backup virtual volume is configured to store incremental storage data from an incremental storage operation ~~on~~ of a primary volume and the incremental backup virtual volume comprises at least one storage volume of a storage pool ~~that includes at least one storage volume;~~

a storage pool management module configured to monitor available storage capacity of the incremental backup virtual volume and to change the storage capacity of the incremental backup virtual volume in response to the storage management policy and the available storage capacity, wherein changing the storage capacity comprises dynamically allocating and de-allocating a storage volume ~~to~~ of the storage pool of to the incremental backup virtual volume in response to the change to the storage capacity; and

an incremental log corresponding to the incremental backup virtual volume, the incremental log configured to map a virtual address of the incremental backup virtual volume assigned to the incremental storage data to a physical storage address of the at least one storage volume of the storage pool.

2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the physical storage address comprises a volume identifier.
3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the storage pool management module is further configured to allocate and de-allocate a portion of a storage volume to ~~the storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume.
4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a read module configured to read data stored in the incremental backup virtual volume by way of a data path independent from a data path used to store the incremental storage data.
5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the storage pool management module allocates and de-allocates storage volumes without user input.
6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the storage pool management module is further configured to allocate a second storage volume to the incremental backup virtual volume in response to a reduction in available space on a first storage volume.

7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the storage pool comprises at least one storage volume corresponding to a redundant set of storage devices.
8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the redundant set of storage devices comprises a RAID (Redundant Array of Independent Disks) storage array.
9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the incremental log comprises a lookup table.
10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the storage pool management module is further configured to increase the storage capacity in response to the available storage capacity increasing above a first storage capacity threshold and to decrease the storage capacity in response to the available storage capacity decreasing below a second storage capacity threshold.
11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the storage pool management module is further configured to de-allocate storage volumes wherein the de-allocated storage volumes are available for allocation to a virtual volume unrelated to the ~~storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for managing incremental storage, the method comprising:

monitoring available storage capacity of an incremental backup virtual volume and changing a storage capacity of the of the incremental backup virtual volume storage pool in response to a storage management policy and the available storage capacity, wherein the incremental backup virtual volume is configured to store incremental storage data from an incremental storage operation ~~on~~ of a primary volume and the incremental backup virtual volume comprises at least one storage volume of a storage pool, the at least one storage volume allocated to the incremental backup virtual volume ~~that includes at least one storage volume;~~

dynamically allocating and de-allocating a storage volume ~~to~~ of the storage pool to the incremental backup virtual volume in response to a change to the storage capacity of the incremental backup virtual volume; and

mapping in an incremental log corresponding to the incremental backup virtual volume a virtual address of the incremental backup virtual volume assigned to the incremental storage data to a physical storage address of the at least one storage volume of the storage pool.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising providing incremental snapshot data of the primary volume in response to a replication operation.
14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein changing a storage capacity of ~~the storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume further comprises alerting a user of a storage over-utilization or under-utilization and changing the storage capacity in response to user input.
15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising reading data stored in ~~the storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume by way of a data path independent from a data path used to store the incremental storage data.
16. (Currently Amended) A system for managing incremental storage, the system comprising:
- a primary volume;
 - a baseline volume configured to store a baseline backup copy of data on the primary volume;
 - a storage pool with at least one storage volume configured to store incremental storage data from an incremental storage operation ~~on~~ of the primary volume in response to changes in data stored on the primary volume after storing the baseline backup copy on the baseline volume, wherein the storage ~~pool~~

~~comprises at least one storage volume~~ is allocated as an incremental backup
virtual volume;

a policy management module configured to set a storage management policy for
available storage capacity of the incremental backup virtual volume;

a storage pool management module configured to monitor available storage capacity
of the incremental backup virtual volume and to change the storage capacity
of the incremental backup virtual volume in response to the storage
management policy and the available storage capacity, wherein changing the
storage capacity comprises dynamically allocating and de-allocating a storage
volume ~~to~~ of the storage pool to the incremental backup virtual volume in
response to the change to the storage capacity; and

an incremental log corresponding to the incremental backup virtual volume, the
incremental log configured to map a virtual address of the incremental
backup virtual volume assigned to the incremental storage data to a physical
storage address of the at least one storage volume of the storage pool.

17. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 16, further comprising a replication module
configured to transmit the incremental data from the primary volume to the ~~storage pool~~
incremental backup virtual volume.

18. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the incremental data comprises incremental snapshot data of the primary volume.
19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 16, wherein
- the primary volume comprises a plurality of primary volumes;
 - ~~the storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume comprises ~~a storage pool~~ an incremental backup virtual volume corresponding to each primary volume, each incremental backup virtual volume comprising at least one storage volume of the storage pool;
 - the incremental log comprises an incremental log corresponding to each ~~storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume; and
 - the storage pool management module monitors available capacity of each ~~storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume and allocates and de-allocates storage volumes for each ~~storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume from the storage pool.
20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 16, wherein the storage module is further configured to allocate and de-allocate a portion of a storage volume to the ~~storage pool~~ incremental backup virtual volume.

21. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 16, wherein the baseline volume is part of the storage pool.
22. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 16, wherein the policy management module resides in a host.
23. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for managing incremental storage, the apparatus comprising:
- means for monitoring available storage capacity of an incremental backup virtual volume and changing a storage capacity of the of the incremental backup virtual volume storage pool in response to a storage management policy and the available storage capacity, wherein the incremental backup virtual volume is configured to store incremental storage data from an incremental storage operation on a primary volume and the incremental backup virtual volume comprises at least one storage volume of a storage pool, the at least one storage volume allocated to the incremental backup virtual volume ~~that includes at least one storage volume;~~
- means for dynamically allocating and de-allocating a storage volume ~~to~~ of the storage pool to the incremental backup virtual volume in response to a change to the storage capacity of the incremental backup virtual volume; and

means for mapping in an incremental log corresponding to the incremental backup virtual volume a virtual address assigned to the incremental storage data to a physical storage address of the at least one storage volume of the storage pool.

24. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium comprising computer readable program code for managing incremental storage, the program code configured to:

monitor available storage capacity of an incremental backup virtual volume;

change a storage capacity of the incremental backup virtual volume in response to a storage management policy and the available storage capacity, wherein the incremental backup virtual volume is configured to store incremental storage data from an incremental storage operation ~~on~~ of a primary volume and the incremental backup virtual volume comprises at least one storage volume of a storage pool, the at least one storage volume allocated to the incremental backup virtual volume that includes at least one storage volume;

dynamically allocate and de-allocate a storage volume to of the storage pool to the incremental backup virtual volume in response to a change to the storage capacity of the incremental backup virtual volume; and

map in an incremental log corresponding to the incremental backup virtual volume a virtual address of the incremental backup virtual volume assigned to the

incremental storage data to a physical storage address of the at least one storage volume of the storage pool.

25. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 24, wherein the program code is further configured to provide incremental snapshot data of the primary volume in response to a replication operation.
26. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 24, further comprising reading data stored in the storage pool by way of a data path independent from a data path used to store incremental data.
27. (Cancelled)
28. (Currently Amended) A method for deploying a computer readable medium for managing incremental storage, the method comprising:
- determining customer requirements for incremental storage;
 - deploying a storage management program for managing incremental storage, the storage management program comprising
 - monitoring available storage capacity of an incremental backup
 - virtual volume and changing a storage capacity of the of the
 - incremental backup virtual volume-storage pool in response to
 - a storage management policy and the available storage

capacity, wherein the incremental backup virtual volume is configured to store incremental storage data from an incremental storage operation ~~on~~ of a primary volume and the incremental backup virtual volume comprises at least one storage volume of a storage pool, the at least one storage volume allocated to the incremental backup virtual volume that includes at least one storage volume;

dynamically allocating and de-allocating a storage volume ~~to~~ of the storage pool to the incremental backup virtual volume in response to a change to the storage capacity of the incremental backup virtual volume; and

mapping in an incremental log corresponding to the incremental backup virtual volume a virtual address of the incremental backup virtual volume assigned to the incremental storage data to a physical storage address of the at least one storage volume of the storage pool; and

maintaining the storage management program.